An Essay
On
Pneumonia.

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Pneumonia may be defined as an inflammation of the substance of the lungs: it may attack one or more lobes of the lung or both lungs.

Viewed anatomically inflammation of the substance of the lung comprises three stages: viz: Inflammatory Engorgement, hepatization and purulent infiltration.

In the first stage the lung is of a dark red color; it is heavy and tough and pits easily on pressure; it contains a fluid but little or no air. On being cut it presents a substance denser than in the normal state; it is easily torn; it is moist and exudes a serous-sanguineous fluid at times frothy.

In the second stage the lung is externally and internally of a dark brownish red color, solid but friable; it does not crepitate and sinks when placed in water. On examining the cut surface one Either observe the color

uniformily distributed or is deposited in the forms of irregular spots among the black pulmonary tissue. There is also perceived a change of texture on the cut surface which is very characteristic; — when the light falls obliquely on the surface, we perceive that it has a granular appearance and resembles the substance of the liver.

In the third stage there is a change of color, the lung is now of a yellow tint, the granular texture has disappeared and is succeeded by a purulent infiltration of the parenchyma; the lung becomes very heavy and pits deeply on pressure; the cut surface is yellow and effuses a large quantity of viscid purulent fluid, of the same color as the surface of the lung, and of very sickly odor.

The bronchi also present several changes: in the first stage the mucous membrane

is reddened and swollen, subsequently it becomes paler and almost always contains a whitish purulent fluid exudation.

The general symptoms of Pneumonia are;- fever accompanied by a dull heavy pressure or sense of constriction in the chest; this pain is aggravated by cough; the breathing is impeded by lying on the painless side; res; piration is accelerated. At first the expectoration is difficult and painful; but in the course of a short time it becomes free; at times it is transparent and of the rust color so very characteristic of this disease.

These symptoms are present in every well marked case of Pneumonia; but in order that the disease may be better described, there are three distinct stages observed, known by the symptoms and physical signs.

Pneumonia is generally preceded by headache, flushed face and dull pressure in the side;

breathing constrained; cough without Ex-
pectoration; from the 2cond to the third day
slight Expectoration; there is present some
crepitation, diminution of sound on percussion;
the respiratory murmer may be mingeled with
the crepitant râle or it may be absent.
The respiratory movements made by the
patient are short and quick, he generally
lies on his back.
In the 2cond stage the pain becomes more
Extensive and the motion of the affected side
becomes impeded. Percussion is dull over the
affected part. On Auscultation, the crepitation is
found to be replaced by bronchial respiration.
The breathing becomes more constrained, short
and accelerated, Speech ceases to be free; the
Sputa becomes more viscid and cannot be
detatched from the vessel by shaking it.
In the third stage we have the same physical
signs but usually the voice and cough

are less resonant and a coarse mucous râle is heard. The face becomes pale and corpse like; there is also a profuse prune-juice expectoration.

All marked cases of Pneumonia pass through these three stages; the last is not necessarily fatal, for partly by expectoration and partly by resorption of pus the lung may return to its normal condition. Pneumonia though a serious is not necessarily a fatal disease; when the general and local symptoms abate, the fever, pain and cough gradually grow less, the substances expectorated more normal, and the respiration becomes more easy and regular, we may prognosticate an early recovery. However we must guard against relapses as they are generally fatal. As the patient recovers the lungs gradually return to their normal state, as is indicated by the diminution of the crepitant

râle and the return of the respiratory sounds.
Among the most important remedies in the treatment of Pneumonia we find Aconite, Bryonia, Phosphorus, Sulphur, Lachnanthes, Lachesis, Borax, Kali carbonicum, Cannabis and Tartarus Emeticus and Lycopodium.
Aconite is frequently indicated in the first stage of the disease especially if there is fever, with heat and thirst, dry cough and great restlessness. It is worthy of observation that this remedy will be of no service if there is any expectoration.
Bryonia is indicated in the second stage when the difficulty of breathing is referred to a pressure on the Sternum, the cough is loose with yellow or thick or copious mucus, either mixed with blood or rust colored. The patient desires or may demands entire quiet and absolute repose. This remedy will be more useful if the attack be of the left side of the chest.

Phosphorus may be used if the mental activity be depressed; if there is slight delirium; rapid sinking of the vital forces; cold sticky perspiration; small, weak, frequent pulse; dullness of the eyes; sunken face; dry lips and tongue; short and difficult respiration; oppression and anxiety; cough with difficult expectoration; Expectoration rust colored; accompanied with diarrhoea.

Sulphur. In the stage of absorption of the inflammatory product this remedy is of the first importance if there is present sudden dry cough, as if the lung would be torn out, with increased pain in the head; loose cough with sensation of excoriation or pressure on the chest and thick mucous expectoration, also with rattling in the trachea with hoarseness; dry, short, severe cough with pain in the sternum or shootings in the chest; Expectoration of greenish masses of sweet taste; obstructed breathing from pressure on the chest; rattling and slight

snoring sound in the chest, relieved by expectoration; the breathing is accelerated by rising up in bed; the whole chest feels as if bound.

In cases in which there is a tubercular taint the administration of this remedy carelessly, in the state of hepatization, with symptoms at all threatening suppuration, may precipitate the development of this process and ensure the destruction of the patient; such cases as are abovementioned can be controlled by the use of Phosphorus or Lachesis as the symptoms point to one or the other of these remedies.

Lachnanthes is indicated if there are brilliant eyes, circumscribed redness of the cheeks and violent delirium. Dry cough as if it came from the larynx, expectoration streaked with blood, with severe pain in the chest.

Lachesis when there is a tickling cough, the tickling being in the larynx, chest or epigastrium,

the expectorated mucus is round and gray, or sticky and yellow, or watery, almost never at night, and is accompanied by coryza. The open air excites severe tickling cough with mucus expectoration. Cough after every sleep. Short, dry, hacking cough, Expectoration frothy, mixed with blood. Pressing pain in the sternum. Burning in the chest at night, with pain in the sternum, much increased by breathing. Pulse small and rapid with hot skin.

Borax is indicated when there is a stitch through the left shoulder blade: expectoration of a white mucus streaked with blood, which is loosened with difficulty. Stitches in the chest at every deep inspiration and whenever the patient coughs.

Kali carbonicum. Dry tickling cough worse in the morning and at night with expectoration only in the morning and during the day, consisting of tough mucus or of yellow pus

which the patient is unable to spit up and is obliged to swallow. The cough is worse at night, after midnight, worse also from motion, cold air, during and after eating and when laying on the left side. Stitches in the right side of the chest.

Cannabis is principally employed in the third stage of Pneumonia, that of absorption, in that class of cases where the deposit is limited to the lower portion of the lungs. It is especially useful if there be a difficult, grenish Expectoration, with delirium during the fever and vomiting of grenish bilious matter; frequent, teasing, hard and almost incessant cough; oppressed breathing when lying down.

Tartarus Emeticus is employed when there is short difficult and oppressed breathing; frequent short dry and painful cough with expectoration of frothy sanguinous mucus. Rattling of mucus in the bronchi.

Lycopodium is indicated when there are stitches in the left side of the chest; dry cough worse at night or when laying on the left side, cough with expectoration at night of yellowish pus; expectoration salty of greyish color or tasting of blood. Pale face, full of deep wrinkles; lips blue.

Sometimes Arnica is indicated when the trouble is caused by a mechanical injury and there is much hemorrage.

Squilla also when there is a complication with pleurisy. Stitches in the left side. Violent cough early in the morning, with stitches in the side at every return of the cough, with expectoration.

Nux vomica will be useful if there is obstinate constipation.

If the mucus expectorated is of a tough ropy character, Kali bichromaticum will be of great benefit.

If gangrene of the lungs should set in Arsenicum is the principal remedy.

The greatest success in the treatment of this disease has been found to result from the use of the "highest potencies." It is ascertained by actual experiment that the virulence of the disease is diminished and the average time of the duration of the illness is lessened; and among those who have had the most success in the treatment of this disease we may mention the late Dr. von Bönninghausen, who invariably used the two-hundredth potency; Dr. Aegidi who, in a report of a great number of cases treated with the "highest potencies," shows his decided preferance for them; names innumerable might be mentioned but we must only pick them among those who apply rigidly the homoeopathic law and find the remedy most similar to the disease.